

- ☑ New fire chief to expand cooperation (back page)
- ☑ Springfield breakfast will honor Service members (back page)
- ☑ Fitness Challenge, June 7 (back page)

Hours of operation

Flyers Inn

Lodging desk 24/7
 Commercial 413-593-5421
 DSN: 589-2700/base Ext. 2700

Chapel Center

Chaplain available 24/7
 Pager: 413-785-3195, Ext. 3031

Fitness Center

Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-2 a.m.
 Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m.-2 a.m.
 Ext. 3958

Bowling Center

Monday-Friday lunch and bowling,
 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Westover Consolidated Club

Breakfast: 6-8 a.m. until Thursday
 lunch, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
 dinner, 5-8 p.m.

Westover Dining Facility

Breakfast, daily, 5-8 a.m.,
 \$1.60 for those on per diem,
 Midnight meals, 10:30 p.m.-1 a.m.
 boxed lunches provided 24/7
 \$3.25 for midnight/box
 for those on per diem
 Ext. 2026/3523

Family Support Center

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Saturday and Sunday of A UTA,
 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
 Saturday of B UTA, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
 closed Sunday of B UTA

Legal Office

Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Base Exchange

Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Shoppette

Monday-Saturday 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Sunday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Barber Shop (next to BX)

Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Saturday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
 closed Sundays & Mondays

Daily Base Shuttle

Every 15 minutes at
 meal times to the club, dining facility,
 Hangar Avenue, supply,
 and bowling center.

First Patriots home from war

BACK HOME – The first four Patriot wing members to return home from Operation Iraqi Freedom, celebrate on the flight line last Friday. The 439th AES team included Maj. Charles Kerr (left), MSgt. Steven Savage (center) and SrA. Rebecca Hinch. Weary, but happy, the aeromedical evacuation specialists received a well-deserved heroes' welcome from family and friends at the Westover Passenger Terminal.

—photo by MSgt. W.C.Pope



by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

American flags, smiles mixed with emotion and relief, welcomed the first four Westover reservists who returned from their 38-day tour of duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The first of five aeromedical evacuation liaison team (AELT) members from the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron arrived in a C-5 at Westover on May 2.

The AES members who were aboard the Dover AFB, Del., C-5 were Maj. Charles R. Kerr, Capt. Daniel J. McCarthy, MSgt. Steven P. Savage, and SrA. Rebecca E. Hinch. About 30 other Air Force personnel from Nellis AFB, Nev., were also aboard the Galaxy.

While the Nellis members were dressed in desert uniforms, it was easy to spot the Westover reservists who wore their battle dress uniforms for the flight.

Kerr was the first Westover member to shake hands with Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, 439th AW commander. Kerr, who

lives in southeastern Massachusetts, looked forward to the final leg of his trip home.

"It feels great," Kerr said. "We were away for only a month and a half. But that's a long time when everything was going on the way it was."

Kerr and the other three AES members make up an AELT team. The reservists supported Army and Marine medical airlift operations during the war.

A group of flag-waving Westover workers, ranging from USO volunteers to civilian employees and reservists, gathered outside the passenger terminal to greet the group. But they no sooner got out of the C-5 than to be welcomed by Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick and other base leadership.

Also on hand to welcome home the reservists was Col. Belinda R. Morrone, AES commander. "It's wonderful. I'm really happy to see them back." Morrone said. "I've been looking forward to getting them back here."

CCMSgt. Jeffrey B. Sherwin, 439th

(continued on next page)

Return... (Cont. from page 1)

Airlift Wing command chief master sergeant, joined Mazick and Morrone with the welcoming party on the flight line. A former AES member, Sherwin is the wing commander's senior enlisted advisor now. He was pleased to see people return whom he had trained for just such an event. Sherwin was NCOIC of an AES AELT during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

"We've never had this many AELT teams deployed before – even during the first Gulf War," he said. "We had two AELT teams during that war."

As of press time, mission requirements had not allowed the remaining four AELT teams to come home. The reservists are still kept busy with evacuating people who may be injured by unexploded ordnance and other events from the war in Iraq.

Fitness Challenge, June 7

The Westover Fitness Center will host its annual Fitness Challenge starting at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 7.

Teams must be coed and pre-registration is required. The challenge includes an obstacle course, basic orienteering course, running, biking and canoeing.

For more information, call the Fitness Center at extension 3958.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003
4,978 passengers --- 1,714 aircraft
17,742,622 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Meals
10,160 hot meals served
Box lunches: 4,641
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
10,088,847 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

PATRIOT express

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using last names of deploying reservists.)

Contact us:
DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020
www.afrc.af.mil/439aw
439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

This publication is edited, prepared, and provided by the 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs office. Call or email with comments, story ideas, or for additional copies. Contents of PATRIOT EXPRESS are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. PATRIOT EXPRESS will be published twice weekly.

New fire chief will expand cooperation

by SrA. T.R. Ouellette

Due to an impressive resume and fresh from winning two significant awards, an eight-year veteran of Westover's Fire Department was selected as its new fire chief.

Charlie Van Gorden was promoted to the position officially on April 20.

Prior to serving here, Van Gorden served in the fire departments at Griffiss AFB, N.Y. for eight years and Malmstrom AFB, Mont. for four.

He recently earned both the Air Force Reserve Command's "Best Civilian Fire Officer of the Year" and Westover's "Civilian Supervisor of Quarter" (First quarter-2003).

At 39, Van Gorden may be one of the youngest fire chiefs serving in the Air Force Reserve.

Contributing to his selection as fire chief, Van Gorden is currently the only member of Westover's 62-member fire department to have achieved the Department of Defense's highest levels of certification in every category in the fire prevention occupation.

"I'm happy to have been selected, but a fire chief doesn't make the department. The

department makes the manager. I can only be as good as they are and we have a very knowledgeable and experienced staff," Van Gorden said. The new chief already has set some goals for the base's fire department.

His main, long-term goal is to change the impression that the department exists only to fight fires. He would prefer his department be known as "Westover's Fire and Emergency Services Department" because of the many non-fire related problems they handle.

"If there is a problem, we want to be the ones you call," Van Gorden said. "We have EMTs on duty 24 hours every day, we are the only department in the local area certified in technical rope rescue (used for high angle/confined space rescues), and as of June 1, every one of our fire department members will be certified at the highest level of hazardous material training," he said.

His short-term goal is to expand the tradition of cooperation with community fire departments.

"Without ever hurting our mission needs here, I'd like to strengthen our relationships with local fire departments for the benefit of our community," Van Gorden said.

Springfield breakfast will honor Service members

The City of Springfield will host what is billed as the world's largest pancake breakfast on Main Street, featuring a free pancake breakfast for anyone with a military ID card.

Col. Thomas Mauzaka, special assistant to the wing commander, will be an honorary co-chair of the pancake breakfast. The event helps celebrate the 367th birthday of the founding of the city.

The pancake breakfast will be served from 8 to 11 a.m.

Following the breakfast, an Armed Forces Day Celebration will be held at the Springfield Armory, located on the campus of Springfield Technical Community College, beginning at 11:30 a.m. The celebration is free and open to the public.

Bowling Center specials

Enjoying bowling is easier than ever at the Westover Bowling Center, which offers a variety of choices for bowlers from league play to cosmic bowling and birthday parties.

Sign-ups are being taken for a Thursday night mixed bowling league. On Monday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. games are only \$1 each and shoe rental is \$1.

Cosmic bowling is featured at the Bowling Center starting at 7 p.m. every Friday and Saturday.

For youths through age 12, the center offers a birthday bowling party special starting at \$7.50 per person. Included are two hours of bowling, shoes, choice of meal, party plates and other condiments.

The Bowling Center's snack bar is open for lunch from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

To learn more about entertainment at the center, call Ext. 3990.

Express-ions

